

FACIAL RECOGNITION ACTIVISTS
December 23, 2022, 1 p.m.

EVAN GREER:

Background:

Director of digital rights group, Fight For the Future. A position he has held for 10 years.

Greer has called for a ban on the use of facial recognition in places of public accommodation, such as retail stores, bars and event venues.

Greer is a touring musician and speaker who resides in Suffolk County, Massachusetts. She graduated from Swarthmore college with a degree in Education and Gender Studies in 2005.

In 2006, Greer founded Rising Tide Boston, a climate justice network.

Greer has written freelance for The Guardian, Time, Newsweek, and HuffPost, has been a guest on Good Morning America and All Things Considered, and has been interviewed about her music activism by the New York Times, Rolling Stone, TIME Magazine, Pitchfork, NBC News, Billboard, the Wall Street Journal, Spin Magazine, CBS News, Washington Post, Democracy Now!, The Atlantic, The Nation, CNN, Mother Jones, and even Fox News.

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Social Media:

Twitter: @evan_greer / 37.7k followers

Fight For the Future:

Mission Statement: We harness the power of the Internet to channel outrage into action, defending our most basic rights in the digital age. We fight to ensure that technology is a force for empowerment, free expression, and liberation rather than tyranny, corruption, and structural inequality. We are an intentionally small, fierce team of technologists, creatives, and policy experts working to educate and mobilize at an unprecedented scale, achieving victories previously thought to be impossible.

Fight For the future lists many current projects all centered around providing safety within technology.

Ban Facial Recognition (Project that began in 2019)

Facial recognition surveillance technology is unreliable, biased, and a threat to basic rights and safety. BanFacialRecognition.com helps users see where facial recognition is being used around the United States, and demand that Congress put a stop to government use of this dangerous technology. It's the most widely shared campaign on facial recognition surveillance and has been endorsed by more than 30 major organizations.

<https://www.fightforthefuture.org/about>

Quotes Regarding MSG:

Madison Square Garden should "immediately stop using this invasive, harmful technology, and lawmakers should act to ban this practice for good."

...

“We’re talking about a powerful corporation’s petty grievance,” said Ms. Greer. “But it’s just really scary to think about the ways this technology could enable powerful individuals, companies and institutions to target critics, business rivals, journalists, love interests — you name it.”

...

“This is the perfect example to show that these tools can be used in ways that are really alarming,” she says. “In some ways, this is kind of an innocuous case — it’s not like [Conlon] was arrested. But the reality is that this was a corporation with what amounts to a petty grievance, using a deeply invasive surveillance apparatus in a way that left a mom sitting outside while her kid went into a concert.”

Greer says the implications of this technology go far beyond squabbles over whose lawyers get to see Brandi Carlile or the Rockettes perform, and could cross over into discrimination. She suggests that there’s a risk of face-scanning tech being used for purposes like ICE raids, and highlights the higher likelihood for people of color to be misidentified with this technology. Greer and Fight for the Future want biometric technology of all kinds to be banned.

“This case really shows that safety is not what they’re even using it for,” Greer says. “Here, they were kicking someone out because of pending litigation. It had nothing to do with the safety of concertgoers. And the reality is there’s other security measures in place. Metal detectors do a lot more for safety than facial-recognition technology. This is why we need lawmakers to act. As long as companies are allowed to do stuff like this, there will always be this incentive for companies to try out pushing the boundaries of how much surveillance they can get away with.”

Tweets on MSG:





Evan Greer is on Mastodon @evan_greer · Dec 20
lol literally went through the same process with this one

...



andy™ @andylevy · Dec 20

i stupidly thought there must be more to this story than “woman denied entrance to see a rockettes show with her child because facial recognition IDed her as working for a law firm engaged in litigation with MSG” but nope MSG says “yep that’s exactly it”
[nbcnewyork.com/investigations...](https://www.nbcnewyork.com/investigations...)

2,147

1



24



Evan Greer is on Mastodon @evan_greer · Dec 20
How do i get myself on the list of people banned from Madison Square Garden and added to their facial recognition database?

...

I would like to be on the list.

2,224

2

1

20



Evan Greer is on Mastodon @evan_greer · Dec 21
NEW: I spoke with @RollingStone about Madison Square Garden using #facialrecognition to eject people from concerts. Piece opens with a different story about a woman who was kicked out of a @brandicarlile concert.

...

Facial recognition should be banned.



[rollingstone.com](https://www.rollingstone.com)

‘Power Run Amok’: Madison Square Garden Uses Face-Scanning Tec...
Multiple attorneys say Madison Square Garden has used face scanning technology to identify them and kick them out of the venue.

1,895



15

21





Evan Greer is on Mastodon ✓ @evan_greer · Dec 21

...

It's pretty crazy that MSG's owner is more or less openly saying that this is a way to punish law firms that sue his company.

Think about what the world looks like if this tech becomes widespread.

Every company's petty grievances enforced through totalitarian surveillance...



Simon Vozick-Levinson ✓ @simonwilliam · Dec 21

MSG says they need to use face-scan tech to identify and eject lawyers they don't like, for safety. i'm wondering if they're gonna kick me out of the next show i go to because of this tweet. great reporting by @MillmanEthan

[rollingstone.com/music/music-ne...](https://www.rollingstone.com/music/music-news/123456789)

3,248

2

11

45



Evan Greer is on Mastodon ✓ @evan_greer · 17h

...

Spoke to the @nytimes about why we're calling for a ban on private facial recognition:

"think about the ways this technology could enable powerful individuals, companies and institutions to target critics, business rivals, journalists, love interests..."



[nytimes.com](https://www.nytimes.com)

Madison Square Garden Uses Facial Recognition to Ban Its Owner's E...
MSG Entertainment, the owner of the arena and Radio City Music Hall, has put lawyers who represent people suing it on an "exclusion list" to...

1,368



4

20





Evan Greer is on Mastodon  @evan_greer · 16h

...

Hey New Yorkers, who are the coolest people on the NYC city council who might wanna introduce a facial recognition ban like the one in Portland, OR that would stop Madison Square Garden from using biometric surveillance?

 6,027

 8

 7

 61



ALBERT FOX CAHN:

Background:

Cahn is the founder and executive director of Surveillance Technology Oversight Project, Cahn is a fellow at Yale Law School's Information Society Project, Ashoka, N.Y.U Law School's Engelberg Center on Innovation Law & Policy, and the Day One Project.

Mr. Cahn is a frequent commentator on civil rights, privacy, and technology matters. He is a contributor to the New York Times, Boston Globe, Guardian, WIRED, Slate, NBC Think, Newsweek, and dozens of other publications. He has lectured at Harvard Law School, New York University School of Law, Columbia University, and Dartmouth College. Mr. Cahn previously served as an associate at Weil, Gotshal & Manges LLP, where he advised Fortune 50 companies on technology policy, antitrust law, and consumer privacy.

In addition to his work at S.T.O.P., Mr. Cahn serves on the New York Immigration Coalition's Immigrant Leaders Council, the New York Immigrant Freedom Fund's Advisory Council, and is an editorial board member for the Anthem Ethics of Personal Data Collection. Mr. Cahn received his J.D., cum laude, from Harvard Law School (where he was an editor of the Harvard Law & Policy Review), and his B.A. in Politics and Philosophy from Brandeis University.

Social Media:

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Surveillance Technology Oversight Project (S.T.O.P.):

Mission: S.T.O.P. litigates and advocates for privacy, working to abolish local governments' systems of mass surveillance. Our work highlights the discriminatory impact of surveillance on Muslim Americans, immigrants, the LGBTQ+ community, indigenous peoples, and communities of color, particularly the unique trauma of anti-Black policing.

<https://www.stopspying.org/>

Press Release
December 22, 2022

S.T.O.P. Demands MSG Entertainment End Use Of Facial Recognition

The Surveillance Technology Oversight Project issued the following news release on Dec. 21, 2022:

The Surveillance Technology Oversight Project (S.T.O.P.), a New York-based privacy and civil rights group, demands Madison Square Garden Entertainment end use of facial recognition at its venues. Radio City, part of MSG, recently booted a lawyer immediately upon entering a Rockettes holiday show with her daughter's Girl Scout troop because her firm is in litigation against MSG. The lawyer does not practice in New York and had no prior knowledge of the case until confronted by security. S.T.O.P. stated the incident highlights how venues can weaponize facial recognition to discriminate against patrons and retaliate against perceived whistleblowers.

"Radio City is on Santa's surveillance naughty list," said Surveillance Technology Oversight Project Executive Director Albert Fox Cahn. "Mass surveillance isn't exactly in the holiday spirit. These technologies are ripe for abuse, and it's long past time that New York City outlaw facial recognition. Giving companies, the wealthy, and the government the ability to track nearly anyone at any time is a recipe for disaster. No one should fear that they'll be banned from public life simply because they fight for their client's rights in court. I'm terrified of a world where every corporation can retaliate against whistleblowers and even those leaving bad reviews by banning them going forward."

Yesterday, MSG doubled down the mother's removal, claiming her presence created an "inherently adverse environment." In September, S.T.O.P. condemned the New York Mets' implementation of a facial recognition ticketing system and launched a petition for its immediate removal from ticket stands.

Quotes Regarding MSG:

"Radio City is on Santa's surveillance naughty list, mass surveillance isn't exactly in the holiday spirit."

ADAM SCHWARTZ:**Background:**

Since 2015, Schwartz has been a Senior Staff Attorney at Electronic Frontier Foundation. Prior to that he spent 19 years at ACLU of Illinois. He graduated from Howard Law School in 1995 and lives in San Francisco.

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Electronic Frontier Foundation:

The Electronic Frontier Foundation is a nonprofit organization defending civil liberties in the digital world. Founded in 1990, EFF champions user privacy, free expression, and innovation through impact litigation, policy analysis, grassroots activism, and technology development. EFF's mission is to ensure that technology supports freedom, justice, and innovation for all people of the world.

Quotes Regarding MSG:

The technology, which has grown more powerful and accurate in recent years, has been used sparingly by corporations because of privacy concerns. Retailers have deployed it to identify shoplifters; airports use it to check in travelers and usher them through security; and casinos rely on it to keep out gamblers they think may cheat. But using it to bar a company's critics is unprecedented, said Adam Schwartz, a senior staff attorney at the Electronic Frontier Foundation. He called it a "major jump forward that needs to be treated as radical."

"This is punitive as opposed to protective. It sets a precedent for other businesses to identify their critics and punish them," Mr. Schwartz said. "It raises the question of what's going to come next. Will companies use facial recognition to keep out all the people who have picketed the business or criticized them online with a negative Yelp review?"